

the Jewish community including his work in advocating Jewish interests, strengthening public support for Israel, building ties with other faith, minority, and ethnic groups and establishing a framework for social action for over six decades.

Mr. Stern has served as a life-long civic leader and truly believes in the mission of Project Interchange. In his own words, he believes the eyewitness experience in Israel is one of the most effective ways to understand the value of the U.S.-Israel relationship. While Mr. Stern has impacted the Jewish Community at the international and national level, he is also extremely influential in local Jewish and secular community associations. He has served as an advisor and a dependable colleague to local elected officials, business leaders, academicians and community activists.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to congratulate Mr. Stern on receiving this award. His significant contributions are much appreciated and greatly admired. I call upon my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Stern and wishing him the best of luck in all future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF COLORADO HISTORY DAY WINNERS

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Caitlyn Darnell and all the other students who will represent Colorado in the National History Day competition from June 12–16, 2005.

Caitlyn placed second in the Colorado History Day competition with her dramatic performance “Anne Sullivan: Reaching Behind Closed Doors,” which chronicles the life of the great teacher who taught Helen Keller to communicate.

National History Day is a year-long education program for middle and high school students across the nation. Students produce documentaries, dramatic performances, exhibits, or research papers related to the annual theme. They then compete in a series of local and state competitions, with the very best traveling to the national competition.

I would like to recognize Caitlyn and all the students representing the state of Colorado for their excellence and hard work. These extraordinary students represent educational excellence in America. I would also like to recognize the students’ teachers, whose support and dedication have encouraged students like Caitlyn to strive for excellence.

INTRODUCTION STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ALCEE L. HASTINGS FOR THE HAITI COM- PASSION ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Haiti Compassion

Act. Do our colleagues know that before Haiti had even achieved its own independence in 1804, 500 Haitian troops joined American colonists in an attempt to drive the British from Savannah, Georgia? In that one battle, Haitians made up the largest military unit to fight in the 1779 siege. Haiti demonstrated through noble action and sacrifice its loyal friendship to the United States more than 225 years ago. It is now time for Congress to do the responsible thing and protect the lives and well-being of those who have stood by us for centuries.

2004 was a debilitating and tragic year for Haiti and her people. Haiti remains severely devastated by the combined effects of ongoing political turmoil and the aftermath of the natural disasters of 2004, such as Tropical Storm Jeanne and Hurricane Ivan. Political oppression and human rights violations are rife in Haiti while poverty and homelessness have become the norm for too many innocent people. To return a Haitian national back to Haiti is not only morally unjustifiable, but poses a severe threat to their personal safety.

If you don’t take my word, then ask, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. On March 11, 2005 the U.S. Department of State issued a travel warning to U.S. Citizens, warning them of the “absence of an effective police force in much of Haiti, the potential for looting, the presence of intermittent roadblocks set by armed gangs or by the police, and the possibility of random violent crime, including kidnapping, car-jacking, and assault.” The Department of State’s Consular Information Sheet states, “There are no “safe areas” in Haiti.” As a result, “U.S. Citizens should avoid travel to Haiti at this time.”

At a time when current U.S. policy is to compel its own citizens not to travel to Haiti, it is unjust to return Haitian nationals to this type of dangerous situation. To return a Haitian national back to Haiti where there is ongoing violence and a devastating environmental situation would pose a severe threat to one’s personal safety. Both Democrats and Republicans have mentioned the history of blatant discrimination and mistreatment of Haitians in the immigration process. Therefore, the time has arrived for us to offer some much-deserved compassion and effective action on the behalf of our loyal friends.

My legislation would designate Haiti under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act in order to render nationals of Haiti eligible for temporary protected status. In light of the political, civil, and governmental crisis and tragic conditions caused by the recent environmental disasters in Haiti, my legislation would make nationals of Haiti eligible for temporary protected status.

I ask for my colleagues’ support and urge the House Leadership to bring it swiftly to the House floor for consideration.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House in the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 2361) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes:

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill submitted by Representatives SLAUGHTER, SHAYS, DICKS, LEACH, and PRICE to increase funds for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

As a member of the Congressional Arts and Humanities Caucuses, and former chair of the California Legislature’s Joint Committee on the Arts, I have had the opportunity to see first hand the tremendous role that the arts play in the education and development of our children. Several academic studies have demonstrated the connection between music, dance, visual arts, and the development of the human brain. It is a fact that arts education cultivates critical thinking skills that are so important in this information-age economy. Children who learn to read music or to play an instrument show improved proficiency in mathematics and sciences.

Today, I am proud to support an increase of \$10 million for the National Endowment for the Arts and a \$5 million increase in funds for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

One of the initiatives under the NEA, Challenge America, expands the National Endowment for the Arts reach to connect families and communities to local arts programs and educational components. Meanwhile, funds to support the National Endowment for the Humanities will continue to assist “We the People” to strengthen the teaching, study, and understanding of American History and culture.

The arts are not only about appreciation and enjoyment, they are also a strong component of our economy. A recent study from Americans for the Arts found that the nonprofit art industry alone generated \$134 billion in economic activity, including full time jobs, household income and tax revenues. More than \$80 billion of this is spent by audiences who enthusiastically attend events in their local communities.

In my own district, there are more than 2,700 arts-related businesses and more than 37,000 jobs including those in visual arts, design, and the performing arts. In addition, the film, television, and radio industry generates more than 26,000 jobs in the district I represent.

I am proud to host an annual Congressional Arts Competition in my district that allows high school students to showcase their artistic talents in painting, drawing, and photography to the community. I have constantly been impressed with the artistic vision and creativity of our young people. This vision and creativity should be fostered, not discouraged.

By supporting the arts and humanities, the federal government can partner with state and local efforts to bolster the quality of life as well as economic and educational opportunities in our communities.